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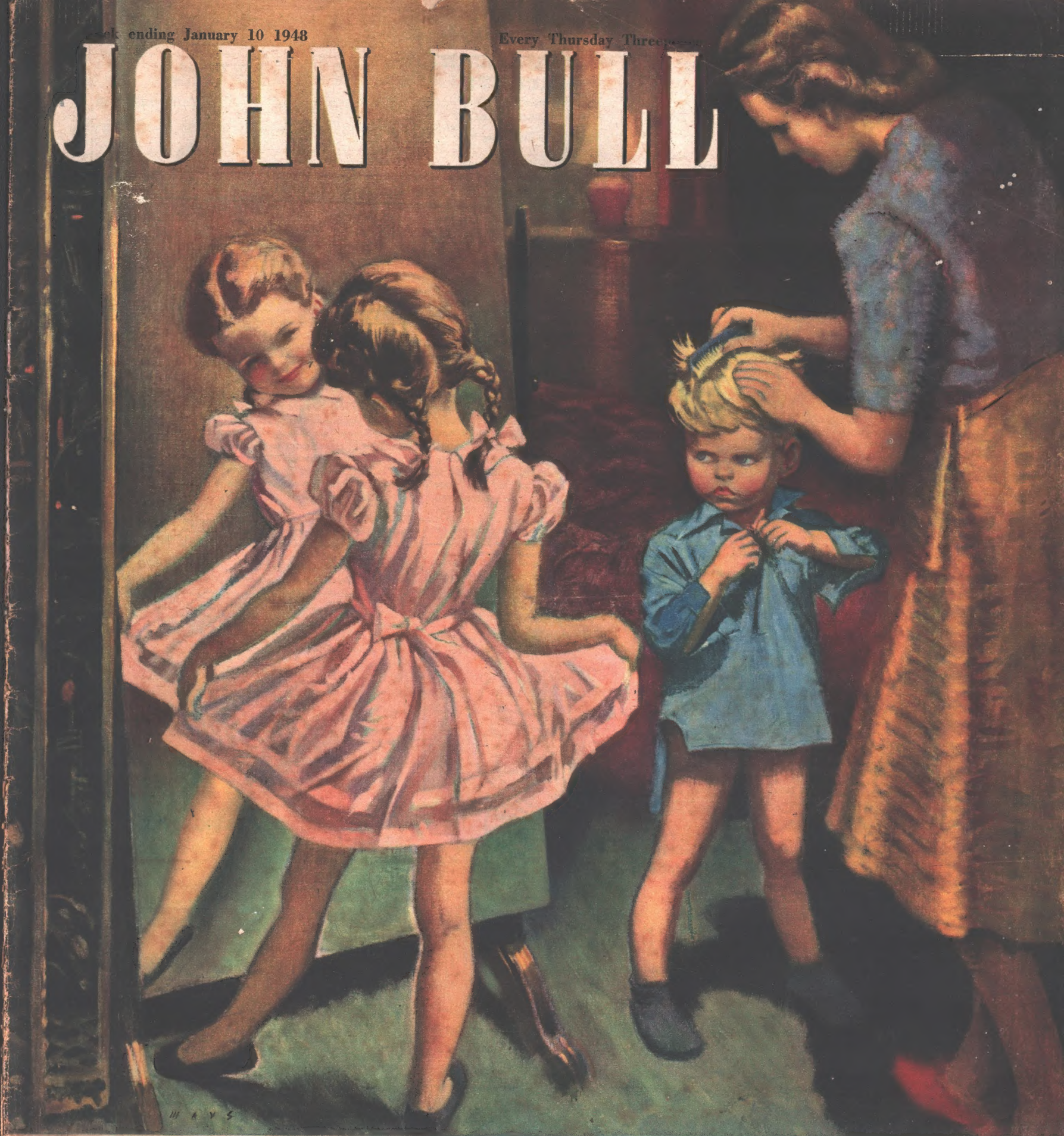

WHY AMERICA ALWAYS WINS AT SPORT

by Alan Hoby

PAGE 15

"Why I support the SILVER LINING Savings Campaign"

by J. Arthur Rank

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JOHN BULL

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Legalized Land-grabbing

WHEN PARLIAMENT REASSEMBLES, one of its first tasks will be to complete the passage of the clumsily named Requisitioned Land and War Works Bill.

This Bill guarantees the Service departments more than a million acres, mostly in England, for training purposes, and puts no effective curb on the brasshats' power to grab more land anywhere, anytime.

It is based on a White Paper, issued late last year, which bore all the marks of having been dictated in the War Office, and which was a grave disappointment to forward-looking people of all classes.

Ever since the war, there has been growing alarm at the Service departments' appetite for land. Both fertile farms and natural playgrounds have either been retained or grabbed anew. Only strenuous public outcry saved part of Dartmoor and several lovely stretches of the Welsh highlands.

Under the archaic laws by which the Services exercise their powers of requisitioning, there was no security for any beauty spot—or any man's crops. Therefore, it was confidently expected that the Government would end this stupid situation, declare a clearcut policy, and ensure that no good farmland, and no land in the long-awaited National Parks, should be lost.

But, judging by the terms of the new Bill and recent action by the Services, the National Parks have apparently been abandoned in favour of tank manoeuvres. So has the splendid footpath plan announced only last November..

Even the solemn promises made during the war to villagers ejected from their homes are to be broken. The War Office is to be allowed to retain fields and houses taken over for battle training.

Altogether, this is a bad Bill, and the House of Commons, by giving it an easy second reading last month, failed the nation. True, there was some telling opposition from farmers' spokesmen, but only two Members so much as mentioned National Parks, the National Trust, or the civilian public's claim to its heritage of open spaces.

This is a shocking betrayal of everything we have fought for.

But there is still time to get this Bill amended—if only the electors will tell their M.P.s how much they dislike it.

Rent Racketeers

UP TO 350,000 NEW permanent houses will be provided this year. The number of homeless will thus be reduced to more manageable proportions, in spite of crisis shortages.

But, as JOHN BULL has often pointed out, putting up new houses is not in itself enough to deal with the problem. At present, speculators are still taking advantage of the scarcity of homes to keep up rents and exact various unfair "dues."

It is true that as new houses go up, demand will ease and rents will fall to fair levels.

But this is likely to take several years. And in the meantime, unless something is done to protect them, hundreds of thousands of families will stay in the grip of the property racketeers and be relieved of a crippling proportion of their income for rent.

Many families, in fact, may be forced near to the starvation line in order to keep up their commitments to landlords.

In its one practical attempt to enforce fair treatment—the setting up of rent tribunals for furnished premises—the Government has fallen sadly short of real justice by giving tenants only three months' security of tenure after an appeal to the tribunals.

Simple legislation could provide full security, and also extend protection to the people who are now being swindled by the converted house, the premium and other rackets. Aneurin Bevan and his housing experts should get down to this, and find a speedy solution.

Feeding the Children

WE SHALL SOON WELCOME to Britain an American called Chester Bowles. He has a good idea.

Mr. Bowles was once the boss of the Office of Price Administration, an American Government agency which kept the cost of living from going crazy during the war. O.P.A. and Mr. Bowles then did a good job, and we are all worse off because they were scrapped so abruptly.

Now, Mr. Bowles is chairman of the International Children's Emergency Fund. He is organizing a United Nations appeal to feed and clothe 3,500,000 children in hungry, ragged Europe and distant Asia.

He is coming here to ask us to help. The idea is that one day next month everyone shall give one day's income in aid of needy children throughout the late war zones.

Mr. Bowles is unlikely to achieve his full target, but his appeal is a worthy one. There can be no iron curtain between children of different nations. Nor, if a child is cold and hungry, need we stop to inquire whether its father is a Communist or a Right-Winger or a Social Democrat. We need but help it.

So good luck, Mr. Bowles!

Unhealthy Hold-up

DOCTORS WILL BE making up their minds this month which way to vote in the British Medical Association's latest plebiscite to decide whether its members shall take part in the National Health Service.

This plebiscite does not sound like a genuine attempt to find out what doctors think about Aneurin Bevan's plans. It is more likely to be a time-wasting device thought up by the diehards at the B.M.A. headquarters.

These men, who are party politicians rather than doctors, hope that the present Government will fall before the National Health Service can be launched. They prolonged their wrangles with the Minister last year because they thought the crisis would end Labour rule. Now they are probably hoping for a General Election in early spring.

Admittedly, there are at least two outstanding differences between some doctors and the Ministry of Health. But these can surely be settled by further negotiation.

In the meantime the facts are these: The National Health Service has been passed by Parliament, which speaks for the people. It will begin to work this summer, B.M.A. or no B.M.A.

One sectional interest cannot be allowed to defy the democratic decision of Parliament.

We expect the responsible majority of the medical profession, at the forthcoming plebiscite, to give its own political reactionaries a sharp reminder to stop squealing and concentrate on healing.

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When you've queued up all the morning
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When you've searched the shops for biscuits
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SAFETY FIRST—NOW'S OUR CHANCE

by HELEN GOSSE

The Basic ban has thinned out traffic. Before bumper-to-bumper conditions return, we must get to grips with death on the road

Waiting for "Go" signal. Real conditions are reproduced at children's model traffic "school" at Tottenham, London. But, even after instruction, are ten-year-old cyclists safe on a busy highway ?

MRS. JONES STANDS IN A QUEUE. She is talking to the woman next to her—talking so animatedly that she does not notice Anne, her three-year-old daughter, wander across the road. The road is the busy High Street of a typical Midland town.

Mrs. Jones looks up. At first she cannot find Anne; then she is momentarily numbed with horror—she sees the child poised on the edge of the opposite pavement, about to attempt the return journey.

The mother waves and shouts to the little girl, telling her to stay where she is. But the noise of the traffic is loud, and either Anne has not heard or has misunderstood. She steps forward into the road. A light van is approaching—too rapidly considering that the road is greasy and the pavements narrow and congested.

There is a scream; the van mounts the pavement. White and shaken, the driver, a lad of about twenty, walks slowly back to stand beside the broken little body lying in the road.

"And so," concluded Traffic Sergeant X, "youth is killing youth." We were standing in front of a huge coloured accident graph, and the sergeant had just delivered a lecture on how to keep death off the roads.

With diagrams, pictures and statistics, he had built up for his audience an appalling picture of death due to human fallibility and the irresponsibility of youth, whether at the steering wheel of a car or at the handlebars of a pedal or motor cycle.

What Casualty Lists Show

Statistics are chancy things, but if we are to make the roads of Britain safer for ourselves and our children, we must realize what official figures really prove.

In 1937 there were 6,590 people killed in road accidents; in 1946 only 5,062. That appears encouraging. But closer scrutiny reveals that, with petrol rationing in operation, the total mileage of registered cars in 1946 must have been a fraction of that in prewar years. Again, how did different classes of road users fare? In 1937, 822 children were killed; in 1946, in spite of a year of "safety" classes in schools, the figure was slightly higher.

The tragedy of Mrs. Jones and her Anne is a composite story of a common sort of fatal accident. An overwhelming proportion of drivers involved in accidents are aged between twenty and twenty-five. The fact that this year Mrs. Jones's Anne was killed at three and not at five, formerly a "danger" age, indicates that instruction in schools is already producing road sense. Secondly, had Mrs. Jones not taken her child shopping in a busy street she would have been alive now. It is probable, though, that Mrs. Jones had no choice in the matter. We require urgently more nursery schools and safe playgrounds under adult supervision, where children can be kept safely off the highway.

If the mother's behaviour was a contributory factor to the accident I have described, it should be remembered that there was no kerb drill when *she* went to school. The next generation of mothers will be more traffic conscious.

Finally, the Jones tragedy reminds us that most of our towns date from the days of horse traffic and have remained virtually unaltered, with pavements too narrow and roads too congested to be safe under modern conditions.

Thousands of people are engaged in the battle to save lives on the road. What is being done today? And what more should be done?

The final report of the Committee on Road Safety was published last year. One interesting recommendation is that "research should be conducted into the determination of accident-proneness by test." It has been proved that people with slow reflexes are likely to run into trouble, and that drivers responsible for fatal accidents frequently have a history of previous "incidents" behind them.

Make Licences Harder to Get

But where are you to draw the line between the "cad" driver and the bad driver?

A police officer was questioning a driver after a smash and received the reply, "White lines? Oh, I never take any notice of them." What is to be done with people like him?

I suggest driving licences should be more difficult to get and easier to lose. When applying for a licence for the first time the applicant should be made to attend a course of lectures on the way a car behaves on the road and on the driver's responsibility towards other road users. A driver with a number of offences behind him should go before a medical board for a physical and psychological test. If he is proved genuinely accident-prone, he should be permanently debarred from taking the wheel of a motor vehicle.

But what about accident-prone cars? There are such things, you know. Stringent regulations ensure safety in the design of ships and aircraft. The Committee on Road Safety approaches the problem but does not square up to it. It advises that drivers' visibility should be assured, that "periodical inspection of motor vehicles should be compulsory." But nothing is said about the inherent need for a certain standard of stability in cars.

A Car that's Danger-proof

Before the war there was a race between manufacturers to produce a car that was cheap, seated the maximum possible number of people, was fast and had low petrol consumption. These tendencies resulted in light cars with high top speeds. But were these popular cars as safe as modern engineering could make them?

I myself drive a low-slung sports car with a drop-head body, because, after many years' experience, I have found that such a car gives me the highest possible standard of road holding and of instant response in emergency. Its two main safety qualities are its low centre of gravity and its shock-absorbers which the driver adjusts from the switchboard to suit changing road conditions. In other words, my car is "pinned down to the road at all four corners." It does not swing or roll at speed round bends.

Surely legislation could be introduced to ensure a certain standard of road-holding ability in every car appearing on the market.

In the past it has not been possible to discover the total number of registered vehicles of each make

on the road. If the Ministry of Transport were to publish each year a graph of the total number of motor vehicles registered and another showing the number of each make involved in accidents this would help to prevent accidents due to imperfect control of cars.

Cyclists are the next problem. In 1946 833 of them were killed, 158 of them aged fifteen or under. The Committee on Road Safety suggests that "the police should have powers to stop pedal cyclists, as they have in the case of motor drivers." No one would quarrel with this. Nothing, however, is said about imposing an age limit on child bicyclists. Can a child of, say, ten be relied upon to look after himself in fast moving traffic? I am convinced that no child of ten or under should be allowed on a bicycle on a public road. Over this age a child could be tested and given a proficiency badge.

The magnitude and urgency of the road safety problem is brought home when it is realized that, apart from fatalities, 157,484 people were injured on the roads in 1946. Let us examine the accident chart of one English county for the first ten months of that year. The table shows all accidents reported to the police.

Number of accidents involving death or personal injury	2,827
Number of accidents with no injury	4,294
Total of all accidents	7,121

SUMMARY OF CAUSES

Faults on part of driver (including motor cyclists)	3,022
Animals in carriageway (chiefly dogs)	1,088
Faults on part of pedestrians	818
Faults on part of pedal cyclists	671
Weather conditions (ice, frost, snow)	581
Defects on vehicles	304
Road defects	101
Other causes	536
Total	7,121

These figures are from a county with typical "bad" conditions to deal with: heavy traffic to the coast, trunk roads passing through towns. On the credit side, it has an active police traffic department with fifty-six safety lecturers covering 1,000 schools.

One casualty factor stands out—dog owners have a lot to learn. It is intolerable that animals were a contributory factor in over 1,000 accidents in one county alone in ten months.

The low number of accidents attributed directly to road defects is misleading. In the widest sense nearly all traffic difficulties are due to bad roads. Some day, long-distance traffic will be diverted away from towns. Cyclists will have tracks of their own, and fast and slow moving vehicles will be segregated.

They Invite Disaster

However, such improvements must wait their turn in postwar reconstruction. What can be done in the immediate future to reduce accidents?

I live in a house overlooking a particularly dangerous section of one of the main roads from London to the coast. During the summer months cars are parked continuously and murderously at dangerous bends and on the narrowest stretches. Would it not be possible to forbid all stopping on these "A" roads except where a coloured post indicates that a car is able to draw right off the fairway?

It is obvious that all classes of road users have to be educated into a real sense of responsibility. Soon Belisha beacons will glow in the night sky like obese harvest moons, but orange moonlight will not prevent pedestrians plunging suicidally off the pavement at the darkest and most dangerous points of the road.

Can we not take a leaf from the Eastern European notebook? In a number of foreign towns a policeman has the right to stop any pedestrian traversing the main road anywhere other than at a controlled crossing and to fine him a shilling on the spot. At the same time, all motor traffic is forced to observe the pedestrian crossings.

I, for one, would prefer to pay an occasional shilling as the price of survival in, say, Belgrade than to join the hosts of the English dead.

"TO HELL WITH YOU — I'M ALL RIGHT"

The ruthless selfishness expressed in these words is one of the evils which, today, menace the structure of our lives, warns the Rev. W. E. PURCELL. And in short-supply Britain, selfishness does not pay

AT LEAST ONE MAN in Britain today knows what selfishness really means. He learnt the hard way as a hungry boy apprentice in a ship's boat one wartime night, somewhere between West Africa and the coast of South America.

Knowing where the rations were, he began warily to work down the gently heaving boat with its cargo of sleeping men. He was getting along well until, out of the dark, a steel hand reached. "You ——!" said a voice, very low. An old seaman had him by the throat. Then the stars showed the boy's scared face and the grip relaxed. "Listen, son," whispered the old seaman, "I got something to tell you."

And he told, whispering in the dark, about selfishness. About how it doesn't pay. If you're torpedoed, and your boat never makes a landfall, you've had it personally whether your belly's full or not. So has everybody else. Therefore it's common sense to keep the rules and help the common cause, see? And he told, too, about how people up against it always have to be tough about selfishness. In an open boat it would be easy to be tough. . . .

It is not so easy in Britain today. But there is not a lot of time left in which to face up to selfishness—and knock it out. The black market is only one form of it. There are very many others, often so disguised that they are difficult to recognize for what they are.

Britain is Like that Ship

Yet every one of the truths which the old seaman told about selfishness applies on a vast scale to our situation now as our country shapes a course towards recovery over rising seas.

They apply to selfishness in houses, in labour, in raw materials, in the black market, in our own personal lives.

Who is any better off if all go down? Each and every attempt to gain personal advantage takes up the productive time of others in the effort of prevention or making good.

Yet stern punishments will not stop these things. Selfishness is a moral disease—making, with Indifference, Fear and Materialism, a grim quartette gravely affecting Britain's present-day morale.

Selfishness is the master killer of hope, common action, and human brotherhood.

What makes people selfish? Personal advantage, of course, is at the root of the trouble. It is an attitude of "me first" rather than "you first." Its characteristic symptom is a tendency to take action without reference to, and often at the expense of, the rest of the community.

Clinical examination of specimen sufferers from this distressing complaint leads to some interesting evidence. I know a middle-aged woman in comfortable circumstances. Her trouble is clothing coupons, and her weakness a habit of talking about how much they cost her. Her ability to buy these things from an "under the counter" source gives her the greatest satisfaction. It makes her feel smart—a jump ahead of all the others.

Another "sufferer" is a worker handling essential foodstuffs. He is the despair of his branch secretary; the thought of him keeps his manager awake at night. His own mates are sick of the sight of him. Why? Because he is a trouble-maker of the first order.

He calls it "keeping his end up"—looking after his own interests. He knows all the answers, and is a very great authority on what his own rights are. The trouble with this patient is that he seems totally incapable of co-operating unselfishly with anybody. He has a badly inflamed ego.

It seems doubtful if much can be done for him until he learns that union solidarity and the essential nature of his job exist for greater reasons than

Specially drawn for John Bull by Arthur Wragg

to give him a stronger hand in playing his own private game.

A third "sufferer" is a grave case. Here "blindness"—symptom of chronic, advanced selfishness—has already set in. This patient, living alone in a large house, cannot see the almost delirious happiness which could be caused by the simple decision to share it. He is afraid of the expense of making alterations.

Yet he has relatives nearby with young children and scarcely anywhere to lay their many heads. But it's no good—the sufferer, under examination, repeatedly states that "he's no fool, and isn't going to risk money in these days."

The Germ Thrives on Scarcity

These three specimen cases yield at least two important clues as to the nature of their complaint. The first is obvious. Conditions of scarcity offer a first-class breeding ground for the germ.

As tiredness, wet feet, plus a filter-passing virus of unknown origin, can cause 'flu, so the need for ration books, controls, plus an odd tendency in human nature to do the wrong thing, can cause selfishness on an epidemic scale.

They don't cause the thing itself. That is always with us. So is 'flu. What they do cause is an outbreak having serious results upon our collective moral health.

The second clue is less obvious and more interesting. Each of the sufferers whose cases were examined thought that selfishness was, somehow, clever. It was being smart, shrewd, hard-headed, this taking a rise out of others at the expense of the general good.

What caused them to think of it in that way? This is a very important point. It has to do with the whole background against which most of us today have grown up, and which may well have to be radically altered if our children in the world of tomorrow are to enjoy the life we hope for them.

The fact is that you and I—and these other selfish people—have for the most part been brought up in what the experts like to call "a competitive society," which really meant a kind of economic free-for-all, with no holds barred. The prize was "Success."

Who doesn't remember the "success story" of the old days, when gilt-edged were gilt-edged, and there was real turtle soup at the Lord Mayor's Banquet? Its theme was the "Dick Whittington" motif—poor boy makes good; he was poor and became rich. But how? Not by dishonesty. That was by no means usually the case. And this, being an impartial inquiry, must take note of the high qualities, enterprise and initiative often shown by many who thus did "make good." Nothing is to be gained by thoughtlessly condemning a system which had at least some things to be said for it.

But there is a great deal to be gained by clearly seeing an unpopular fact—that "get on or get out" and "me first," while possible attitudes to life in an age of plenty, amount to wrecking tactics when there is so little that what there is has, for the general good, to be carefully planned and shared out. The truth is that selfishness of this sort, however grandly named, is out of date.

But it has left a hangover. An American film shown over here in the past few years had for its hero a stockbroker nicknamed "The Bull." The story showed why. Nothing could stop him when he charged for "success": his triumphs were ruthlessly achieved over the trampled bodies of competitors.

He was an economic rogue-male. When a bull elephant on the loose starts breaking the place up, he has to be shot. People like "The Bull," even though less extreme sufferers from his selfishness disease, are dangerous in an economy like modern Britain's, when the only hope is that all should pull together.

But many of us have been conditioned to admire the qualities which go with this sort of thing. That's the trouble. Ruthlessness, drive, "to hell with you, I'm all right," the philosophy of the jutting chin—haven't these been held up to us as models?

Man with a Wad of Notes

"Go then, and do likewise" has been the advice to many on the threshold of life. The snag is that they are doing so. Thousands with no intention or opportunity of following "The Bull" on to Wall Street have none the less learnt almost automatically to admire the "do down or be done" outlook which, to an extreme degree, he typifies. Selfishness can be quite impressive. Who can altogether avoid a feeling of guilty admiration for the big man in the bar at a race meeting who flourishes a wad of notes and grins: "Taxes? Rations? Whad'yer take me for?"

What can be done about it—now, while there is yet time to save our civilization?

Put our ideas into reverse, and begin to realize how out of date a good many of them are in an age when money is rapidly losing much of its power? By all means. The sooner the better. But selfishness is a disease. Has it a cure—a penicillin which can bring rapid results?

It has. The inventor was a man in the Middle East some two thousand years ago. His name was Christ. Ironically enough, we have called our money-grubbing civilization "Christian" after Him. They said Jesus wept when He looked down upon Jerusalem. Does He weep today as He looks down upon so many of us, busy with our miserable little personal selfishnesses, even though, the big ship of richer days having gone down, we are all in the same economic open boat, where each must strive for all, and all for each?

We're All in it Together

That is what He taught us to try and do. In the end, that is by far the happiest way of getting along together. And the idea at the centre of it is this: that other men and women are not, as all kinds of false christs have for too long taught too many of us to believe, our competitors; they are—not sentimentally but as a practical economic fact—our brothers and sisters.

Why can't this dramatically effective antidote be tried now, on a big scale, and while there is yet time? The reason is that some antidotes, of which this is one, are very difficult to apply in the presence of other moral maladies, of which indifference is one.

NEXT ARTICLE: People who "couldn't care less"

THE EDUCATION OF FOUR-EYES

by BIANCA BRADBURY

ILLUSTRATED BY YATES WILSON

A chap who plays the fiddle and knows all the answers in form is bound to be put down as a swot and a sissy by other fellows. But there was more than one side to Four-eyes

HENRY SHANKS, known to his contemporaries as Spindleshanks, and Joseph Robinson, who went under the aliases of Joe, JoJo and JoJo the Dog-faced Boy, lay prone on Henry's garage roof. From their vantage point they could spy on an enemy safely. If either of their mothers stepped to a back door, they could disappear in a trice.

They had retired this day to brood. They brooded in silence for a while. Then Joe said gloomily, "He's too good to be true."

"Yes, just listen to that."

From the house across the street, into which the new family had moved, beautiful sounds issued forth upon the peaceful Saturday air. The new boy was playing the violin. He had been at it, by actual timing, for two hours. It was hard stuff, and when the new boy hit a bad note he didn't make a squawk with the bow and chuck it. He went over the rough place patiently until he got it right.

"The guy's nuts," Henry said. "He *likes* that stuff!"

"He's dangerous!" Joe answered. "My mother's going to remember how she paid for my lessons on a squeeze box for a year, and I never did learn that 'Tales of Hoffmann.'"

The music ceased. Henry and Joe got up. The door across the street opened, and the new boy came mincing down the path. He was small and skinny for a ten-year-old. Joe and Henry were skinny, too. Today they were fashionably attired in old shirts and slacks of a painty ripeness appropriate to Saturday. The new boy wore school clothes. His shirt looked suspiciously clean. He was a four-eyes, and his thick-lensed glasses gave him a frog-like look. To Henry and Joe he was a blot on the landscape.

"We could grab him—easy," Joe said.

"And what would it get us? A good bawling out, that's all. Let's see what happens in school. I betcha the class will cut him down to size."

"Windy Jones will," Joe agreed. "I haven't much use for Windy, but it might be a pleasure to see him go to work on this bloke."

SURE enough, on Monday, when Henry and Joe on reluctant feet started schoolward, they heard a panting behind them. The new boy was now wearing shorts with a crease. A crease in school shorts was unheard of.

"Hope you fellows don't mind if I walk with you," he puffed. "I've just moved here."

"Oh, yes?" Henry said carelessly. "What's your name?"

"Derek Seldes."

That they had to chew on for a while. "I see, but what do they call you? Dick or something? You've got to have a better handle 'n that."

"Oh, I'm never called anything but Derek." He smiled ingratiatingly into their faces. They didn't know whether to feel sorry for him or to poke him in the nose. His next remark almost solved that problem.

"Our class is old Beagle's room," Joe exclaimed. "Old Beagle sure is tough. Boy, how she lays on the homework."

"Oh," interrupted the new boy. "I don't anticipate any trouble."

That held them for the rest of the way. They were speechless.

Derek had anticipated right. He had no trouble at all with Miss Beagle. After thirty years of pounding learning into the young, Miss Beagle was unnerved by the shock of a boy with any manners at all, much less splendid ones.

The class watched and listened, stunned. Miss Beagle no sooner rapped out a question than up shot his frail, thin hand. Of the growing antagonism of his fellow men he seemed utterly unaware.

The break passed, and came geography period. Now, Henry Shanks for some irrational reason, had studied the geography lesson. "Who will tell us about the Amazon River?" Miss Beagle asked. Derek's paw was the only one in the air. Suddenly Henry's shot up, too. Startled and impressed, Miss Beagle said crisply, "Tell us, Henry."

Volunteering to recite was not a habit of Henry's. He shambled to his feet. "Well," he said, "the Amazon River is in South America. It's in Brazil. It's very long and wide." He paused, stuck.

"That's quite good, Henry," Miss Beagle said. "Can anyone else in the class add anything?" Derek's hand waved frantically. "All right, Derek."

THE new boy smiled at Henry patronizingly, as if to say that he couldn't help it if he was smart. "The Amazon River is 3,500 miles long and at its mouth is 200 miles wide," he began. "Its main tributaries are the Madeira River and the Rio Negro. It drains Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia——"

Before the flow of information the class sat tight-lipped, and Miss Beagle waved her hands, trying to shut off the flood. Through the rest of the morning Henry glowered darkly at the newcomer; Joe glowered in sympathy, and the rest of the class joined in.

Derek tripped confidently out with the others at noon. As they reached the boys' door, Henry and Joe saw Windy lounging against the steps, waiting.

Windy was the class bully. As Derek came abreast of him, Windy reached out a bulging arm and half-lifted him off the ground. Derek writhed helplessly.

"You want a punch in the snoot?" Windy drawled.

"I haven't done anything to you!"

"Sing smaller, that's all. No fresh kid's coming in and running the class, understand? Just sing small, Four-eyes, from now on." And Windy gave him a push that sent Derek sprawling.

The others chose not to see the incident. Henry and Joe, unlike the good Samaritan, passed on the other side. They were almost out of the school yard when the smaller boy caught up with them. He was smiling again. His everlasting grin was getting on their nerves. "I take it that boy is the school bully," he said. "The best thing, I imagine, is to ignore him." He failed to notice Henry and Joe's stolid silence and chattered all the way home.

Derek, they learned as the days went by, had an inexhaustible supply of information that he willingly tapped on any subject. He was the thorn in the side of the class. But the others suffered him only at school. The rest of the time he was Henry's and Joe's problem.

They couldn't escape him. Four times a day, twice to school and twice home again, they endured his chattering, amiable society. If they didn't talk, he soliloquized. If they tried to carry on an ordinary conversation between themselves, he barged in—oh, so politely—with facts to refute their vague conclusions. If a plane flew overhead, he knew the make, the horse-power and the speed.

Even at home they were not free. If they lurked inside the house, they heard his plaintive "Henry! Joseph!" outside. "That nice Seldes boy is waiting to play with you," their mothers were likely to say. "You include him in your game." Even Henry's garage roof was no longer a sanctuary. Derek discovered it in no time and came clambering up the trellis.

They endured him for several weeks, and then they grew desperate. On a Saturday morning they found themselves blessedly alone. They lay on the roof of the garage, soaking up the sunshine and the peace of Four-eyes' absence.

"How are we going to get over Four-eyes?" Henry asked. "If we don't get him out of our hair pretty soon, we'll go nuts."

"He's all talk," Joe said. "Say!

Continued on page 12

Four-eyes seized Windy's wrist and gave it a sharp twist. It was a calamity yet a triumph

EUROPE'S IN-BETWEENS

by WILLI FRISCHAUER

Europe is torn between political extremes. Yet in many countries there are men who, given their way, might still bridge the gulf between Left and Right, East and West

A THIRD FORCE. . . . The phrase is on many lips in Western Europe today. Some people see prospects of a negotiable middle road between unbending Communism and reborn Fascism.

The Third Force, they believe, is a factor to be considered when summing up the political future of France, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Germany and the northern peoples

Who are the Men of the Middle Road who lead the Third Force—the men in whom, incidentally, Britain's foreign policy has tended to place its hopes since the war?

In France two men stand out as representatives of the Middle Road. They are Leon Blum and Georges Bidault. They are both heroes of the resistance. Blum, elder statesman and Socialist, when indicted by Vichy, succeeded in putting Petain in the dock. Bidault organized the underground. Their international prestige has not suffered by any reverses to their political fortunes at home.

Remember that when the French crisis broke out it was Leon Blum who called for support for the Third Force. And remember that strikes and fighting almost to the point of full-scale civil war broke out after his appeal was turned down by the French Chamber.

More dramatically than in any other country, the merits of the "middle road" have recently been demonstrated in France. For the time being Schuman's Government holds the balance, but the French cannot long put off a final decision.

The apparent choice before them is between the Communists led by Maurice Thorez and the "People's Rally" of General de Gaulle. A British Labour Government could not happily support the right-wing extremists in de Gaulle's party. And Communist control in France would conjure up visions of Soviet Russia mounting guard on the English Channel.

We know that only men like Blum or Bidault and their followers could hold the balance, restore democracy to France, and keep her on the middle road. And so—there is no question of this—both of them can count on the support of Britain and America.

Feud Between Friends

Consider now a political meeting near the famous Forum in Rome where generations of citizens have argued and discussed the world's affairs. Neo-Fascists raised their arms in a well-remembered salute. Communists replied with clenched fists. The din of shouted slogans, taunts and threats all but drowned the speaker's voice.

The speaker who was trying to preach a policy of the middle road was the leader of Italy's moderate Socialists, Giuseppe Saragat. Few of us are familiar with his name. Yet Saragat is an important man. It is on men like him, on policies such as he represents, that Britain relies to prevent the division of Europe into two hostile camps.

Saragat's chances—and with them British hopes of keeping Italy out of the extremist camp—depend on the outcome of his personal battle against a one-time friend, Pietro Nenni. Together they fought Mussolini and Fascism, together they worked in exile to restore Italy to democracy. Together they returned to Italy after the liberation.

But Nenni, a great Socialist leader himself, has decided to make common cause with the Communists. Saragat has split away from him and the two old friends are no longer on speaking terms. Saragat says that we must beware lest Europe is crushed between America and Russia, the two giants.

In France, Blum's advice was ignored—with grim results. As foil to both Communists and de Gaulle, he could count on British support

Nenni thinks only the Communists can prevent Fascism returning to Italy. Saragat denounces violence. The Communists would probably welcome chaos.

And so Britain has no choice but to support Saragat. If he can find a common platform with moderates of other parties his "middle road" policy may stand a chance of success as the postwar economic situation settles.

A man of a different calibre is carrying the torch of moderation in Czechoslovakia. Jan Masaryk, son of the founder of the Czech Republic, is a brilliant, sparkling internationalist, well-known all over the world and popular in America, where his mother was born. When he returned from London to his native Prague after the war he met another group of exiles coming from a different direction—from Moscow where they had pledged themselves to bring Communism to Czechoslovakia.

Masaryk and the Communists? It was unthinkable. But Jan Masaryk is a shrewd politician. Today he serves under a Communist Premier. Wherever he goes he cites his own position as showing that Russia does not seek to dominate Czech politics.

Those who weigh Masaryk's chances of personal and political independence have other views. "Masaryk is a prisoner in his own country," says one. "However far he travels," says another, "he would not dare to return if he spoke out of turn abroad! Russia allows him to remain as long as Czechoslovakia is dependent on help from the West. Without such help Masaryk's days are numbered."

And without Masaryk, Czechoslovakia would not be allowed any side-long glances at the middle road in European politics. In the meantime, "Young Masaryk," as he is called—although he is nearing sixty—says he is reading Pushkin and Shakespeare at the same time.

Where there are such moderates of character, personality and political honesty and independence of mind, the country benefits and Europe can count on a pillar of peace. Einar Gerhardsen is Prime Minister of Norway, which outwardly conforms to the pattern of postwar Europe: ravaged and impoverished by the war; Russia on her borders.

He Will Not Sell Out

There were quislings in Norway and brave, patriotic underground fighters. Yet tempers in Norway are calm. The country has remained a peaceful democracy. The man of the people who is Norway's Premier can take much credit for that. Once a road worker, Gerhardsen became leader of Norway's Labour Party and Mayor of Oslo.

When the Nazis invaded Norway he returned to his job on the roads, and soon went "underground." Arrested and deported to Germany, he was threatened with execution as a hostage against British Mosquito raids. The liberation saved him and he was made Premier in 1945. Norway is poor and needs help. But Gerhardsen would not sell his country's soul for economic aid.

Like Gerhardsen, many stoic men of the north belong to a fraternity forged behind the barbed wire of Nazi concentration camps, where men not only fought for survival but dreamed about a better world. Among them was a German, Dr. Kurt Schumacher, who heads the Social Democrats in Western Germany.

A martyr and missionary or just another Prussian? A true Socialist or just another German nationalist in the guise of a democrat?

Schumacher, one-armed, delicate, and ageing, his health broken by years of captivity, takes on stature when he speaks. There is magnetism in his voice. What is at the back of his mind?

I have heard Schumacher reproaching the British and American occupation authorities in Germany when they seemed to support "Big Business" interests. With equal frankness he has denounced German fellow-Socialists who have deserted him to join the Russian-sponsored German Unity Party of Communists and Socialists.

I have no doubt that Schumacher's aim is to restore Germany to a powerful place among the nations. Those who would not like to see that happen should have no truck with him. But I am equally convinced that Schumacher hates Fascism and militarism, at the hands of which he suffered.

Britain's Stooge, Say Critics

Schumacher probably deserves the support which the Foreign Office is said to be giving him. But it is exactly this support for which many Germans denounce him as a "British stooge." There's a lot to be said for allowing him more independence. That would help him to convert his compatriots to a policy of moderation.

These, then, are some of the men on whom Britain pins her hopes of moderation in Europe; the men who can help to bridge the gulf between East and West; the leaders of the Third Force without whom the Continent, and Britain, might become the battlefield of a Third World War—with no winners.

BOFFINS ARE MAKING IT BRITAIN CAN MAKE IT

Research work of our scientists is the first link in a chain of production that is putting ingenious new products in the bags of Britain's salesmen. This is the second article on the Boffins and their peacetime secrets

by HARRY HOPKINS

FOR CENTURIES THE OLD ALCHEMISTS bent in their garrets over their reeking crucibles and fevered spells, seeking the "philosopher's stone" which would transmute the base metals into gold.

Today their dream has come true.

If our modern alchemists, the Boffins of industry, do not turn lead into gold, that's by way of an oversight; they change soya beans into steering wheels, milk into buttons, coal into plastics, seaweed into textiles, grain into rubber, wood pulp into silk, peanuts into wool.

We no longer have to wait on Nature. We can reproduce—even better—the laborious processes of the silkworm, the tree, the lac insect. We can transmute the dross of gasworks and refineries into scores of thousands of brand-new products, tailored to fit exact needs.

New industries rise like genies from the test-tubes.

A few years ago there was no such substance as nylon. Then a group of U.S. chemists took coal and water and air and rearranged them—and a new ambition ruled in every woman's heart.

In our present impoverished state there may be some comfort in these reflections. For they mean that much of the old geography book stuff about a nation's resources is out of date. They mean that a nation's most important export material is its scientific brains, its technical experience, its native ingenuity.

These we have. It was, in fact, a young Londoner, William Henry Perkin, who, by producing the first synthetic dye—mauveine—in the mid-nineteenth century, laid the foundation of the mighty dyestuffs industry in which this synthetic age of ours was nurtured.

Today Perkin has worthy successors. The great new disease killers—penicillin, the sulfa drugs, "Paludrine"—have spread the fame of British scientists about the globe.

Britain's latest effort in the field of man-made textiles, Terylene, sleek, hard-wearing, versatile, is now undergoing dyeing tests. Suit and hat makers all over the country are trying out "Ardil," our new synthetic "wool." For polythene, British insulating plastic, product of eight years' research, a wide range of uses from beer engine tubing to lampshades is developing. "Perspex," which caught war's spotlight in the bomber turrets, finds more and more peacetime applications.

Nineteen-year-old Ruth Vernon-Brown tests a television projection system. She's one of "backroom" team who may reshape industry

New Workshop of the World

New materials, properties unknown in the world before. Ever-widening opportunities for the manufacturer who has the imagination, enterprise and alertness to grasp them.

From the laboratories of Imperial Chemical Industries—mammoth combine which each year spends about £3,500,000 on research and development—new industries, new exports push out like runners from a strawberry plant. Here you can watch a new workshop of the world being built—cleaner, brighter, quieter than its Victorian predecessor.

Let's cross South London's jungle of tramlines and bricks and take a glance at one corner of that workshop. In a street in Wandsworth hammers resound, lorries lumber up with loads of machinery. They're putting the finishing touches to a new factory. That is the end of the process. We must go back eight years for the beginning. The beginning was in a man's head.

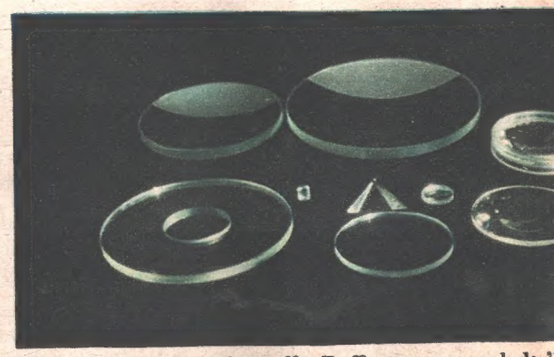
The head is long, lean and greying. It belongs to a forty-two year old physicist, Derbyshire-born journalist's son, domesticated father of two. Dr. David Starkie was bitten with the optics bug quite a long time ago. Graduating from Sheffield University, he worked in the Department of Glass Technology, got his Ph.D. for original work on spectroscopy—the behaviour of light rays.

A Long Way to Flashpoint

When in the first year of the war he joined I.C.I.'s Plastics Division it might have looked as if he was deserting his old love. But some of those plastics were remarkably transparent. Pretty soon Starkie's mind was running over the familiar lines of inquiry worn deep since student days.

A versatile new material, a far-sighted student's fifteen years' of thought and study, the urgency of war (with the Ministry of Supply calling for a substitute for glass lenses)—the materials of the modern alchemy were in the crucible.

But flashpoint was a long way off. The transparent plastic, while tough and fine for aeroplane



Plastic lenses just off a Boffin "conveyor belt," and (right) the man who helps to make them Arthur Brown works on a mould. He' been in on new process from the star

domes, was not constant enough for optical use. The chemists and the physicists got together again. Two years of experiments, infinite variations on the "Perspex" theme, produced under high pressure. Trial and error. Elimination. Trial and error. Then, "Transpex" I and II, the answer.

"Transpex" had all the necessary properties of optical glass, plus a good many that optical glass had not. One was of particular significance. It could be moulded.

The traditional method of grinding large complex lenses was laborious and expensive. Worse, the "spherical" lenses thus produced gave rise to aberration in the light rays passing through. Only way to avoid this was to design for each job special lenses of irregular shapes. But to grind such "a-spherical" lenses was prohibitively costly. So you just had to do without them.

He Got a Bright Idea

But if you could *mould* such a lens . . .? Then you might take six months and spend hundreds of pounds making the glass mould—but it wouldn't matter because you could turn out thousands of lenses from it on mass-production lines. In 1942, however, that *if* was still a pretty big if. There were no end of snags. The plastic contracted twenty-five per cent on setting. When it came out of the mould it conformed only roughly to its shape.

Starkie suddenly got one of those bright ideas which seem so simple afterwards. Hitherto it had been taken for granted that the lenses would be moulded in one operation. Well, now they would try two.

Now not only would the halves of the mould move in as the material contracted, but there would also be a second operation in which more plastic poured in to form a "skin," filling the gaps that had opened between the lens and the mould. The idea was tried—and it worked. The skin grew perfectly on to the body of the lens. There was no sign of a join. The basic principle—"surface finishing"—was established.

Research men carry new industries in their knapsacks—but no magic wands. There were still disappointments in plenty. The chemists and physicists brooded over the temperamental behaviour of the raw material. The mathematicians slaved away at designs for new moulds, tracing light rays through lens systems, reaching for perfection by the process of elimination. The master craftsmen worked away grinding the moulds.

Then, one day in 1943, a lens emerged from the

JOHN BULL COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM KEMP

mould accurate to within two wavelengths of light. The researchers permitted themselves a sigh of relief. Everything was going to turn out all right. From the overcrowded laboratories of I.C.I.'s Plastic Division the team now moved out to a Victorian mansion in Welwyn. And there the notebooks started to fill again. "Transpex" was a poor conductor of heat. Controlling irregularities in setting was a long process.

It was about seven years before Dr. Starkie could report that he had this business of making accurate plastic lenses fairly licked.

"It's been quite exciting," he said quietly, in a little room at the top of the old house in Welwyn, "to see all this happen before your eyes, to be in on the start of something pretty big like this." We were standing in front of a table covered with black cloth. The black cloth was spangled with gleaming plastic lenses.

Starkie picked up a pair of prisms and handed them to me. They shone like diamonds. But you hardly felt the weight on your palm: fine for binoculars. In the middle of the black cloth, like the centre piece of a jewellery display, stood two tiny bottles. Inside was a little transparent sticky liquid, like glycerine. That was the starting point of all this. That was the genesis of a new industry. Yes, the alchemists' dream had come true all right.

I picked a big magnifying "glass," mounted on legs, off the cloth. There was the same queer lightness again. "I wrote a report with that for eight hours," commented Starkie. "And even then I felt no strain. A-spherical, you see. They've been tried out in the hosiery and electrical trades and the Medical Research Council is interested, too."

Other products for which cheap a-spherical lenses are to be mass-produced are microfilm readers, signal equipment, 16-mm. projectors, school film-strip machines. But the most momentous application is in television. They are going to mean a lot to television.

Touch of Switch and Picture Lives

Starkie touched a switch, and one of the demonstration systems set up at the side of the room came to life. Not only was the picture projected much larger and brighter than usual but there was no fading at the edges, no interference from reflection of the highlights of the room. No longer would it be necessary to huddle over the television receiver as if waiting for it to boil.

Over in the corner was an optical system for cinema television. "The biggest television projection system in the world," said Starkie. The main lens, moulded in "Transpex," was twenty-seven inches across.

But what about the Americans? Could it be that the obsolescent English, with cobwebs on their beards, had actually stolen a march on *them*?

"Well," commented Dr. Starkie, "they *have* a plastic lens-making method, but it hasn't our accuracy. We're the only people who've perfected a method giving complete stability in tropical countries. We're hoping for a big export market."

Now the team is working on the final—but not the easiest—stage in this adventure into the great, still largely unexplored territory of man-made materials. They are translating laboratory methods into techniques of factory production, working out the system by which conveyor belts will carry the lens moulds through heating tunnels, worrying out the problems of exact control, dust-free floors, special clothing for the workers, thermostatic temperature regulation.

Soon now, the conveyor belts will jerk into life and Britain's overseas salesmen will have in their bags an attractive new export range conjured from a bit of sticky colourless fluid in a test tube.

Thus, slowly, brick by brick, the walls of Britain's new world's workshop may rise. New fabrics, "wonder drugs," cheap improved lenses, more efficient plastic insulators, versatile surgical instruments find their place on our shop counter alongside the heavy machinery, the ships, the locomotives. The walls rise slowly. For research is not magic, black or white. Research is an act of faith, faith in the power of man's mind.

If we are to survive as a great industrial nation we have to hold fast to that faith and work by it.

Continued from page 8

Let's get your air-gun and ask him over. With those screwy glasses he wears, he won't be able to hit the side of a barn. He'll just have to sing smaller. There he comes now. Four-eyes! Hey!"

Henry heard Joe issuing the invitation and Derek's enthusiastic response as he went into the house to fetch the gun.

The smaller boy trailed them out to the shooting range Henry's father had rigged up against the old chicken house.

"I might not be so good today," Derek apologized. "I haven't done much shooting lately."

He hoisted the air-gun and let fly. They walked to the target to see and returned considerably shaken. Derek had hit the second circle in. But maybe it was a lucky shot. Joe took his turn and laid his shot alongside Derek's.

Henry hit the circle outside. "Your turn, Four-eyes," he said.

"I said I wouldn't be so good today." Casually he shot again. The slug hit smack in the bull's-eye.

Desperately they put theirs a little nearer, but not within the magic circle. The next few Derek landed in a neat row right across the centre. Theirs got wilder and wilder until, sweating with concentration, they had trouble hitting the chicken coop, much less the target.

At last, luckily, they ran out of slugs. They sank into the tall grass disgusted beyond words. Derek nestled cosily beside them. "When I get in practice, I'll show you some fancy shooting, if you like," he offered.

It was the rest of the day before they could get rid of him. It was the rest of the week before they could get his mind off further competitions. It was Saturday again before they thought of something that might stop him. Once again with hearty but false hospitality they lured Derek behind the garage.

"Are we going to shoot?" Derek asked eagerly.

"Naw. We thought we'd try some judo. You know judo, Four-eyes?"

"I don't like it much," the new boy said. "Somebody's likely to get hurt."

"You scared?" Henry asked.

"No, of course not."

"Okay, then. You wrestle Joe first, and then I'll wrestle him."

The smaller boy laid his glasses on a window ledge and reluctantly advanced. He seemed to grope, and Joe backed away. "You can't see," he mumbled. "That wouldn't be fair."

"I can see enough. Come on."

Joe moved in on him, while Derek squinted myopically. Joe's hand shot out and grasped the other's thin, bony wrist. At the touch, Derek galvanized into action. Joe described a graceful arc through the air and landed with a thump on the soft grass, six feet behind his opponent. Derek stood blinking, half-blind, helpless.

Maybe it *was* a fluke this time. Henry said, "Let's see you do that again."

"Not on me," Joe said with finality.

"I'll show you, Henry," Derek said.

Henry set his feet hard. All he had to do was get the wristlock and brace himself. He got hold of Derek's wrist all right, but the rest of Derek was a smooth, co-ordinated hunk of power. Henry found himself sailing through the air. He uttered a disbelieving sigh and lay still.

Derek groped to the window ledge and found his glasses. With them on he was all efficiency and beaming goodwill. "I hope I didn't hurt you fellows," he said. "I happened to learn judo from——"

"Don't tell us," Henry said, waving his hands feebly. "From the head of the Japanese secret service, that's all."

They just couldn't win. Derek led a charmed life. How long, Henry and Joe moaned in private, would he get away with it? Surely, if there was any justice, the little runt would get his come-back.

THE HUMAN MACHINE — by ROFFE THOMPSON

WHAT INTELLIGENCE MEANS

I SUPPOSE there are very few people who would admit to being unintelligent. Plenty admit they're not clever. Plenty admit they don't know anything about a given subject, but I've yet to meet anyone who says bluntly: "I'm not intelligent."

Yet I wonder how many people really are intelligent? Intelligence is the ability to think *effectively*. Someone has defined rather well what this means:

"To think effectively involves knowledge of the topic, dispassionate weighing of the evidence, ability to see clearly what follows from the premises, readiness to reconsider the premises if necessary, and, in short, the courage to follow the argument to the bitter end. . . .

"Some of our failures are due to our prejudices which lead us to distort the evidence; to our keeping our minds in blinkers and thus closed against criticism and incapable of further reflection; our habit of using words repeated parrot-fashion. . . ."

Not at all easy to be intelligent—but there's no harm in trying!

We are rapidly approaching a time when this country will need all the intelligence it can muster, a time when effective thinking or the lack of it will make or mar people's lives for generations. In your own interests you have no greater duty to perform than to learn to think clearly and well.

In these critical days every person who can do this is worth a thousand who think loosely and sloppily.

Then Windy Jones took the problem right out of their hands.

For some time the class bully had been turning all his attention upon the frail little guy with the glasses. He pinched him in line, stole his pencils, tripped him in the aisle. For a long time Derek ignored him. Then the worm turned.

One afternoon during penmanship period Windy rambled up the aisle to lay his paper on Miss Beagle's desk. As he passed Derek he deliberately speared him in the ribs with his fist. Derek yipped, his arm jerked, and a cascade of ink poured down his desk and into his lap.

Spilling ink was a major sin. The class sat rooted in its seats. Derek, Henry noted, had turned white and was shaking. A sudden sympathy for the little guy welled up in Henry, but he stifled it. Derek was so smart; he knew all the answers. Now, Henry thought, let's see him get out of this mess.

Miss Beagle was standing at her full ramrod five feet eight. "Who has spilled his ink? Oh, it is you, Derek? Well, perhaps it was an accident, but please see that it does not happen again."

Derek mopped futilely at the mess before him. Suddenly he threw down his ink-stained handkerchief. "It was no accident, Miss Beagle. Windy Jones punched me."

A gasp swept the room. Squealing on Windy! It was like calling down the wrath of Jove. What had got into the little guy? There wasn't a boy in the room Windy hadn't beaten the stuffing out of. This was going to be a massacre.

Derek was ahead of Henry as the class filed down the stairs after school. When they reached the door, Windy was waiting. As Derek passed, he reached out an arm and hooked him out of line.

"The wristlock!" Henry yelled.

Derek had no chance to use the wristlock. Windy held Derek aloft with one hand and with the other lazy fist punched him in the midriff. Derek, a sickly yellow, his glasses askew, lay in a heap in the schoolyard dust.

To his horror Henry found himself advancing. He sidled up to Windy like a crab and landed a blow on the bully's ear. Windy turned, amazed. "You want a fight, Spindleshanks?"

Henry had his guard up, but a vicious punch sneaked through. Suddenly Henry's nose was an aching blob, and he felt the blood running. He sat on the ground trying to shake his head clear.

Derek, he saw, had got to his feet and was weaving uncertainly into combat again. Now, that was a funny thing. If the little squirt was all blow and show-off, why was he wading into the fight again?

Purposefully Derek stalked up to Windy.

"Ya comin' back for more?" the bully snarled.

Derek's eyes were on Windy's fist, and just as his hand shot out to catch the big boy's wrist, up came a knee that caught Derek in the stomach again. He went down for keeps.

Derek actually avoided them for the next few days. At first they enjoyed the unaccustomed peace. Then they became curious and, finally, baffled.

One day coming home from school they noted that he was shuffling along just ahead of them. "Hey, Derek!" Henry yelled. "Wait for us!"

Derek stopped. "What's been eating you?" Joe demanded gruffly. "You sore at us?"

Derek's eyes, behind his thick glasses, were wide with honest surprise. "Sore at you? Of course not!"

"Well, why have you all of a sudden dropped us, then?"

"You mean you w-want to be friends?" Derek stammered. "After Windy licked me, and I dragged Henry in?"

"Heck, there's nothing wrong with getting a licking from Windy. Who hasn't?"

They walked in silence for a bit. Henry was trying to figure out what was going on in the little squirt's head. Then a light dawned. "Didn't you ever get beat at anything, Four-eyes?" he asked.

"No," Derek said. "No, I never did."

"Don't you know you don't *always* have to win?" Henry went on excitedly. "You're a smart kid, Derek, but you're too smart for your own good."

Joe met Henry's eyes, and the two friends grinned triumphantly over having figured out an answer. "That was all that was the matter with you, Four-eyes," Joe said. "You needed your ears pinned back. That's the only true thing Windy ever said—you need to sing smaller. That's all."

It was an oddly deferential Derek who rejoined them. He came to them for advice. In conversation they could get a word in edgewise. In class, too, Derek's hand didn't shoot up quite so fast. He wasn't so everlastingly polite to Miss Beagle. The class, which had regarded him with loathing, began to extend a lukewarm, tentative friendship.

Windy was worse than he'd ever been. He harried and hounded Derek to provoke him again into battle. Derek paid no attention. Four-eyes, Henry decided, was at last getting smart.

What happened was so unexpected that it shocked Henry as much as it did the rest of the form.

It was arithmetic period. Windy was copying a problem on the blackboard. Beside him, also copying, was Derek.

Windy was still drawing ungainly numerals when Derek finished his neat figures and quietly laid his chalk in the rack. He stepped over to Windy, seized his wrist in his thin hand, and gave it a sharp twist and a heave. Windy sank to his knees with a howl.

Miss Beagle jumped to her feet. "Derek!" Fighting in the schoolroom was an offence of such enormity that no rule covered it. "Release Edgar at once!"

"Lemme go! Lemme go!" Windy blubbered, his fat face in agony.

Derek gave the bully's arm one final twist, and Windy emitted a shriek that echoed through the corridors. "There," said Derek calmly. "You may get up now." And he walked back to his seat.

A long session was required for Miss Beagle and the principal to find a punishment to fit the crime. It was going to take him weeks, Derek told a fascinated Henry and Joe as they walked home together, to expiate it—weeks of lost breaks and extra work. There was the added calamity of having to take a note home to his mother, describing the offence in all its shocking details.

"But what got into you, Four-eyes?" Henry asked. "Weren't you scared?"

"No," said Derek. "I knew you fellows were with me." He linked arms, a gesture they used to hate. Now they disengaged themselves gently.

"We had you down for a sissy," Joe said gruffly. "That fiddle playing and all."

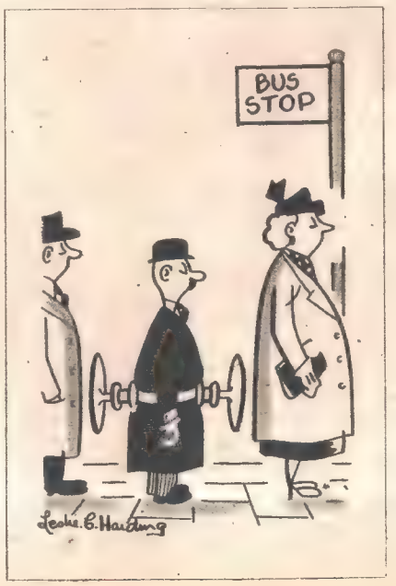
"Heck," said Derek, and the slang came out oddly. "A violin is fun. Do you know what? Henry's got a piano, and he could take lessons. If Joe got a banjo, we could have an orchestra."

"Learn *music?*" They stared at the queer little froglike creature hopping between them. "*Music?*"

"Think it over. Well——" Derek waved the principal's note, setting forth the description of his crime "——see you later." And he trotted into his house.

Henry and Joe retired to the garage roof. They lay on their stomachs, gazing at Derek's front door. "Say, Joe," Henry said slowly, "I wonder how much piano lessons cost."

There was a long silence. Joe, the music hater, broke it. "The three of us," he said gloomily, "are going to have to cut an awful lot of lawns to buy me a banjo. Say!" He reared up and glared at his friend Henry. "I thought we were going to educate that guy! Now who's educating who?"



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FREE SPEECH

Power cuts in the mines; a way to more production; a cry from a deserted wife; a word to kettle-makers

AS A MEMBER OF OUR local pit consultative committee, which deals with all problems affecting output in the mine, I was astonished to learn that electricity was to be cut off in the pit for a period of fifteen minutes in order to conserve fuel, and that further cuts may be necessary.

To me this seems farcical; and it might also be disastrous. Many pits have to have pumps running day and night, and any stoppage will mean rising water as an added risk to already dangerous work.

Cutting off power at the source in this way is like killing the goose that laid the golden egg.—J. L. S., East Northumberland. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Part-time Rebuilders

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE like myself must be feeling that there is some way we can help to win the battle of production which the country faces.

Isn't it possible to start a register at the labour exchanges for part-time work? Many projects could be tackled by "weekend armies."

We will enjoy the luxury of the five-day week more when we become a land of peace and plenty, and this can only come through hard work.—GEORGE GILFILLAN, 18 Oakfield Avenue, Glasgow, W.2.

Fifteen Bob a Puff

MANY PEOPLE MUST be shocked to learn that day-old ducklings are being killed to make powder puffs. Farmers used to get 7s. 6d. each for six-week-old ducklings, but now the trade spivs will pay the same for day-old ducklings, for which they can get 15s. to £1 as powder puffs.—A. BLAND, 127 Mere Road, Leicester.

Husbands Who Disappear

ABOUT EIGHTEEN months ago I signed a mutual separation agreement. For three months my husband, who had left me without leaving an address, sent my allowance, and then it stopped. I issued a summons within three weeks of the last payment, but it has not been served as I was unable to give the police my husband's address.

Since last January, I have done everything in my power to trace him without success. As he has committed no criminal offence, official action cannot be taken to trace him. Now, having signed the agreement, I cannot get a divorce on the grounds of desertion, and have to support myself and my five-year old daughter while my husband is allowed to evade his responsibilities entirely.

In this way the law encourages such men to desert their wives and children.

When it becomes obvious that husbands have no intention of honouring the agreement, it should be declared null and void, and the wife granted a divorce or be given the status of a widow and a pension.—MRS. P. C. R., Staffs. (Full name and address enclosed.)

What the Tests Foretell

I AM SURE THE CRICKET loving public would appreciate a little more news of cricket all the year round.

If some of our daily papers could possibly devote a column a week to first-class cricket now being played in Australia it would give British cricket fans some idea of what to expect when the players come over here for the summer Tests.—J. PUCKERILL, 69 West View Road, Barrow-in-Furness.

More Spout, Please

WHEN WILL KETTLE-MAKERS realize that water finds its own level? I have a small kettle which must be filled to the brim. The end of the spout is level with the brim, so that when the kettle is filled the spout is, too. The least movement sends water spurting over the clean grate or, worse still, over my hand or foot, giving a nasty scald.

The remedy is a taller spout for small kettles.—MRS. MARY MITCHELL, 3 North Shore Street, Campbeltown, Argyll.

Arsenal players gather round John Bull's present to the club—the original of Yates Wilson's cover picture published on December 6

P.F. *On Adoption, Wartime Germany, Our "Political" Kids*

AS THE FATHER of an adopted child, I found William East's article, "New Parents for Old" (JOHN BULL, December 20) very interesting.

My little boy, left by his mother at the age of four months, was adopted by us when he was five years old. It took us six months to prove we were suitable parents, and cost more than we could really afford.

My one ambition is to give my boy everything I never had, and a full and happy life. This in itself will be small repayment for the happiness he has brought into our lives. Being a boy he is often up to mischief, but this adds to our enjoyment, and we wouldn't have him otherwise.

But the law regarding adoption needs changing in one respect: at present, if an adopted child dies, his effects (usually a bank account given by foster parents) can be claimed by his blood mother, as the next of kin. Parents who abandon their children are not morally entitled to anything belonging to them.—J. EVANS, 2 Penarth Road, Bridgwater, Somerset.

Arranging Adoption

I WAS SURPRISED to see in your article on adoption the statement that since 1943 adoption of a child could not be arranged except through local authorities or adoption societies.

My husband and I adopted a baby in 1946 from a private home for unmarried mothers. No questions were asked about our religion.

We had tried previously to get a child from an adoption society, but could not fulfil the requirement asking us to prove that we could not have children of our own.

Neither my husband nor I were prepared to be sterilized in order to answer truthfully.—MRS. A. PATON, 76 Egmont Road, Sutton, Surrey.

Railway "Cripples"

THE IDLE RAILWAY WAGONS shown in the JOHN BULL photograph and described by a reader, Alex Forbes (December 20) were probably "crippled" and due to be broken up. Many others are being held up for heavy repairs caused by shortage of material and skilled labour.

To run wagons in this condition, whatever the emergency, would be disastrous.

The chief cause of the trouble is privately owned wagons. These are of such varied types that spare parts are hard to get, as many of them were built as far back as 1880.—H. J. GOLDSMITH, 17 Mansfield Road, Worthing, Sussex.

Our Arsenal Cover

MANY THANKS FOR your magnificent cover painting of the Arsenal football team (December 6). It was a great portrait of the players. The artist has managed to recapture their features better than any photographer.—S. FLUTTERMAN, 51 Selcroft Road, Purley, Surrey.

**** Yates Wilson's painting was afterwards presented to Arsenal F.C. (see photo).*

This week's cover was painted by Douglas L. Mays, who has four daughters of his own, but had to rely on his memory for the picture. "I could never get five minutes' peace to make sketches during the kind of home-wrecking that precedes a children's party," he says.

Germany *Wasn't* Like That

AS A WARTIME prisoner in Germany, I should like to refute the letter from a German p.o.w. in JOHN BULL (December 20). He complained he was refused admission to a British cinema and claimed conditions were different in wartime Germany.

In fact, any foreigner who had the impudence to seat himself in the same building as the Master Race would not only soon have been evicted, but taken to a mental hospital—that is, if he were still alive. I saw three such incidents, two in Karlsruhe in 1942 and one in Strassbourg in 1943, when a girl accused of being a Pole was stripped and stoned to death.—Z. R. STAWICKI, 16 Brownfield Road, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.

A British P.o.w.'s Experience

FOR FOUR YEARS I was a p.o.w. in Germany, working in a coalmine. I was never allowed out of camp, except to go to work. We worked hard—and for three out of four Sundays, too. We received paper money which was quite useless as there were no goods kept in the camp. Our rations were a pint of soup and four slices of bread a day.

In the next camp, Ukrainians and Poles were allowed out, but were ill-treated and kicked by the Germans, and certainly not allowed in cinemas until all Germans had entered.—P.o.w. 21796, ex-Stalag VIIIB. (Full name and address enclosed.)

They'll Get Over It

YOUR READER should stop worrying about children separating into rival political factions in the playground (JOHN BULL, December 20).

When I was a child, we took elections in real earnest. During the weeks of the campaign, we split into rival groups, and opposition factions were greeted with ironic jeering.

On election night outside the polling station the air was rent by our battle cries. After the natural jubilant gloating of the victors, all vituperation was completely dropped and we kids joined forces again very happily.—M. C. TIPPING, 336 Evelyn Street, Deptford, London, S.E.8.

Because of space shortage only a limited selection of the many readers' letters submitted can be printed. If your views are squeezed out, it does not mean the Editor has overlooked them. For every letter used, John Bull pays one guinea. Letters should be marked "Free Speech" and carry full name and address of sender (preferably, though not necessarily, for publication).

JOHN BULL QUIZ

TITLE WOMEN

(1) Who wrote the novel *Rebecca*? (2) Which Russian author wrote the book *Anna Karenina*? (3) Daniel Defoe wrote a book about a lady of easy virtue. Who was she? (4) Can you name the two women Hugh Walpole put in the titles of his books?

WORDS

(1) What is a whatnot? (2) Might you eat, sleep on, ride in or fall over a ha-ha? (3) What is a moot point, a zoot-suit, a coot? (4) What do the prefixes quasi-, pseudo-, crypto-, mean?

MUSIC

(1) Which parts of their works, particularly of concertos, have composers sometimes not written themselves? (2) What is the main objection to the Albert Hall for concerts? (3) Why do musicians object to the popular use of the word *classical* to describe any "good" music? (4) Can you put these composers in chronological order: Bach, Bartók, Beethoven, Brahms, Britten?

ROYALTY

(1) How many reigning queens has England had in the last 500 years? (2) Which European dynasty has produced no male heirs for three generations? (3) Who is at present next in succession to the British throne after Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret? (4) Which of these countries are monarchies: Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland?

(Answers on page 16)

Alice Marble, America's blonde bombshell with a racquet, who made other stars seem pat-ball queens

WHY AMERICA ALWAYS WINS

by ALAN HOBY

Controlled violence in the arena. That's the big thing America's champions have got that ours haven't. To redeem failures, Britain must also have a real Sports Plan

FOR BRITAIN, 1947 was a year of disaster in world sport. It was not only that we were beaten in boxing, golf and lawn tennis—three sports we taught the world; we were annihilated. The difference in degree is important.

Bruce Woodcock lurching hopelessly to disaster against the ex-Pennsylvanian miner, Joe Baksi; Freddie Mills belted first by Gus Lesnevich and later by the American Negro, Lloyd Marshall; the Wimbledon eclipse; the British rout in the Walker and Ryder Cup matches; our abysmal failure to win either the men's or women's amateur golf championships. . . .

All along the line it has been the same pathetic story. In every case our champions have been mown down by sportsmen from across the Atlantic who seem to hit everything—man or missile—ten times as hard as we do.

Why? To profit from the lessons of defeat is the only way of arresting Britain's decline in world sport. We must learn what it is, for example, that makes Jack Kramer the perfect tennis machine.

Why do the Americans—never, it seems, the British—produce a woman athlete who can hit a golf ball with the force and accuracy of Mrs. ("Babe") Didrikson Zaharias? In the British women's amateur championships at Gullane last year she consistently outdrove our girl golfers by fifty yards or so. She can slam that small white ball nearly four hundred yards and, such is her power, she has little trouble outdriving most men.

When asked how she does it, thirty-four years old, ten-and-a-half-stone "Babe" wisecracked: "I simply loosen my girdle and let fly!" Although this shocked some prim and proper spinsters on the links, the "Babe" had not given the real reason for America's dominance in sport.

After watching the effect of the massive *and accurate* hitting power of these Americans, I am convinced that the basic answer lies in just two words, *controlled violence.*

Whether we like it or not, this creed of pure force is the new philosophy in sport. Analysed, it means simply that if you want to become a world champion, you must cultivate, as a basis, a mania for all-out aggression. You must be prepared to sacrifice everything—leisure, social life, personal pleasure—to a system which puts the result before the game, a system based on scientific savagery.

Never Gets Worried

Again, to be a champion you've got to be super-confident. At Wimbledon last year, after his match with Johansson, the Swede, who took him to 7-5 in the first set, Jack Kramer told me: "I never worry. I let the other guy do the worrying." Compare Kramer's calm faith in himself with the nervy, rabbit-like fidgets which afflict so many of our up-and-coming boys and girls when confronted by the big occasion.

Discussing Kramer's remarkable successes, the American magazine *Time* declared: "He plays tennis the way Joe Louis stalks an opponent in the ring. He is always boring in, making the other fellow feel he is doomed unless he does something tremendous. All who play against him have the same complaint. He makes you feel you are backing up and backing up until you can't back up any further."

Unfortunately, British athletes have never even begun to understand the principle of controlled violence—the win-or-bust spirit which characterizes every American top-liner and many other foreign stars, too. Reared in a gentler, more academic school where the game is played for the game's sake, our sports stars have never quite appreciated that sport today is a ruthless occupation, a commercial proposition in which there is no room for flops. Either you're a success and cash in, or you're a failure and get out.

While our athletes were concentrating on finesse, copybook strokes and stylistic elegance, the Americans were rearing a new race of giants who scorned such outmoded notions.

We had our first glimpse of the new technique when Big Bill Tilden brought his famous cannon-ball serve to Wimbledon's cloistered courts. But the real forerunners of the Kramers, the Betzes, Margaret Osbornes and Doris Harts were a lank, languid-looking young man called Ellsworth Vines and a golden-bronzed blonde named Alice Marble.

Alice, the Smasher

Alice was the first woman in lawn tennis to model her game on a man's. She hit the ball so hard that she made stars like Suzanne Lenglen and Helen Wills-Moody look like pat-ball queens. Her volleying was lethal, her smash and serve deadly. California's "cover girl" would have beaten most of the men players to be found in this country.

As for Vines, I shall never forget the sensation he caused when he first appeared at Wimbledon in 1932. Giving one of the most ferocious exhibitions of controlled hitting I have ever seen, he crashed through to the final, obliterating Australia's Jack Crawford and England's "Bunny" Austin on the way. I wondered how such blistering speed was possible. His laconic reply was: "I guess I try to hit everything harder than the other guy."

Like Joe Louis in boxing and Craig Wood in golf, Vines was really the high priest of the philosophy of controlled violence in sport. Over a decade ago, Craig Wood perfected a technique of hitting a golf ball which Leonard Crawley, the well-known amateur golfer, has described as "appallingly effective." It involves superimposing the perfect putting technique on every stroke in the game. From this revolutionary change in striking the ball, America's present crop of world beaters, Byron Nelson, Ben Hogan, Demaret and, of course, the unique Zaharias, who now, like Kramer, has turned professional, built up their devastating game. And that's mainly why Britain's Ryder Cup boys were "massacred."

In boxing, today's American fighters sub-consciously model themselves on Joe Louis. Like Vines and Craig Wood, the Brown Bomber owed something to the past—to champions like Dempsey and Jack Johnson. But fundamentally these three were the pioneers. They discarded tradition. They blazed the trail.

Britain Must Copy

The British will go on being beaten until some of this controlled violence is injected into our own rather desultory methods. Don't say we can't do it, that we're not built this way. That's rubbish. Any nation which can produce a Fred Perry, a Henry Cotton, a Tommy Farr, a Sydney Wooderson, can produce its fair share of world beaters. But we have got to modernize our approach to sport and we have got to give our youth both the financial incentives and the facilities they lack at present.

We need a plan which will cut through those snobbish and outdated distinctions that still prevent amateurs in tennis, golf and boxing from mixing, fighting or playing with professionals. I wouldn't mind, in fact, if we cut out the word "amateur" altogether from our sports dictionary. It costs a golf amateur hundreds of pounds to play tournament golf seriously these days and, in nearly all major sport, the term "amateur" has become nothing but a euphemism.

Search Out New Talent

Britain's Sports Plan would call together all the controlling bodies of sport to pool resources and tap the country's enormous reservoir of youth for new talent. We need new gymnasia, more running tracks and games parks and a centralized panel of well paid, efficient coaches—as in Sweden.

And if the State won't subsidize our embryo sportsmen—as it does in other countries—we must form an overall British Imperial Sports Council which will. Set up a Sportsmen's Fund throughout the country. Get every sports-lover to contribute from 2d. to 6d. a week according to his means. The money could be collected by local sportsmen and administered by a special committee of well-known sports stars. It would soon come rolling in.

Get on or get out. That should be our new sports slogan. As a man who spends most of his life reporting every branch of sport, I believe we can still beat the world. But we must work harder and put more violence—controlled violence—into our efforts. At the moment we are still obsessed by a sort of prim politeness which handicaps our athletes wherever they go.

Let's stop being such good *losers.* Let's become good *winners.*

With my feet up

by Ian Fox

Up Among the Lowbrows

ON PEAK DAYS, nearly a thousand people an hour have been passing through the exhibition of pictures by Van Gogh at the Tate Gallery, London.

Queues stretched round the building. I can imagine women tagging on the end inquiring, "What is it—nylons?"

"No, Van Gogh."

"How do you cook it?"

Art seems to be becoming too popular. In the galleries, you can't see the pictures for people. As for concerts, I believe audiences come out of one, grab a sandwich and start straight away to queue for the next without ever going home. You'd call them drones if they didn't work so hard listening to music.

I can see art shows becoming the popular entertainment of the future. It will be lowbrow to be highbrow.

The National Gallery will draw a bigger gate than the Arsenal. Mention that you are going to Chelsea on Saturday, and someone will ask "Whose studio?" instead of "When's the kick-off?"

Everything will be changed round. Artists will be put under contract by galleries and thousands of pounds paid in transfer fees. Cricket matches will end by drawing pictures instead of stumps. A man will say to a girl, "Come up and see my etchings" and mean it.

Art news will occupy the whole back page of the newspapers. Greyhound tracks will be empty. "Going to the dogs" will mean visiting the exhibition of animal paintings at the fashionable little Studio Splosh. An old master will be considered more important than a new mistress.

And on the radio, events like the Derby and boxing matches will be relegated to the Third Programme.

Answers to Quiz on Page 14

TITLE WOMEN. (1) Daphne du Maurier. (2) Leo Tolstoy. (3) Moll Flanders. (4) Vanessa; Judith Paris.

WORDS. (1) A Victorian piece of furniture—an open stand with shelves for the display of bric-a-brac. (2) You might fall over it—it is a sunken fence. (3) A debatable point; a coat of exaggerated length with peg-top trousers worn by male American jitterbug fans; a bird (wrongly called bald). (4) Quasi- means almost or seemingly; pseudo- is false; crypto- is secret.

MUSIC. (1) The cadenzas—where the soloist can display his virtuosity in an ornamental passage. (2) Its notorious echo. (3) Because most of them use it for one of the two main divisions of music, the other being *romantic*. (4) Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Bartók, Britten.

ROYALTY. (1) Five (two Marys, Elizabeth Anne, Victoria). (2) The House of Orange-Nassau (Netherlands). (3) The Duke of Gloucester. (4) All except Italy and Finland.

AS I WAS SAYING . . . by HERBERT HODGE

STANDING ROOM ONLY!

HAVING SPENT A LARGE PART of my life working with public vehicles of one kind and another, I was interested in the recent Parliamentary discussion about the present state of our buses.

Are some thousands of our buses dangerous, owing to old age, as Mr. Solley, M.P. for Thurrock, asserted? Or are they, on the whole, mechanically safe, as Mr. Callaghan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport, maintained in his reply?

Mr. Callaghan said he wanted to reassure the public—and perhaps he succeeded. But I doubt if he reassured many of the men responsible for running some of our more ancient buses. He certainly didn't reassure me by calling Mr. Solley's picture "grossly exaggerated."

I think Mr. Solley was right in questioning the mechanical safety of many of our fifteen- and twenty-year-old buses; though Mr. Callaghan was correct, so far as his statement went, in his remarks about their safety in operation *up to the moment*.

The missing links in all that, of course, are the men who've kept those buses running safely all these years—the fitters and the drivers. And the great unanswered question is how much longer they can keep them running, without replacement.

Mr. Callaghan evidently felt that, because of the high standards of safety in the garages, there was nothing to worry about, no matter how old a bus might be.

Senility Sets In

But there comes a time in the life of every vehicle when the most skilled and conscientious fitter can no longer maintain it in as good a condition as he'd like it to be. There's a bit of slop here; a bit of slack there; a trifle of wear and tear in almost every joint and moving part, due to senile decay.

If you could get enough spare parts, you could, perhaps, rebuild the old bus almost as good as new. But it would obviously be more sensible, and more economical, to buy a new bus—if you could get a new bus.

Lacking both the new parts and the new bus, you do the best you can with what you've got. The old bus is bodged up, and goes back into service.

The drivers all know the bus. They wouldn't dream of taking any liberties with it—especially when it's loaded, and the dead weight of forty or fifty passengers makes that funny little kink in the steering, that slight hesitation in the brakes, that peculiar lurch on a bad bit of road, all just a little bit more so. Still, everything's fairly safe, so long as you're careful.

Until a day comes when a driver begins to have his doubts. Maybe the driver of another vehicle has taken a liberty—or maybe some extra-heavy passengers on the top deck, plus an extra bad bit of road, plus a momentary relaxation on his part have given that peculiar little lurch its chance, and he's nearly had the bus up on the pavement. Or he's almost thought he had.

But nothing's happened. Nobody's hurt. There's no addition to the accident figures. Nobody's even noticed anything—except the driver, who's feeling a bit sweaty around the back of the neck.

The experts, apparently, can put that bus through the regulation tests—*empty*—and find nothing radically wrong with it. But put it into service on a busy route, get it loaded down with passengers on an awkward bit of road—and maybe the driver starts imagining things.

More passengers, few new buses. It's a problem. If the buses that take us to work break down, production is liable to break down, too

Mr. Solley mentioned an unofficial strike of drivers at an Essex garage in protest against what *they* felt to be the dangerous condition of some of their buses. Mr. Callaghan said there was no need for drivers to come out on strike in order to call attention to alleged defects. The union could inform the Ministry, and the Ministry would send examiners to the garage. All this would only take a few days—perhaps only a few hours.

But, whether it takes hours or days (and I think it's more likely to be days) what happens about the old bus meanwhile?

Everybody at the garage knows the old bus is a bit dodgy; though, for obvious reasons, no one in authority will officially admit it. Everybody, from the chief engineer downwards, would like to replace it with a new bus; but there aren't sufficient new buses available; and the public must have a bus of some kind. If a driver refuses to take it out, and there's a spare bus in the garage, he'll probably be given the spare without any argument—except, perhaps, a bit of chip from someone on the garage staff about being "windy." But if there isn't a spare bus at that particular moment, the driver has to make a difficult decision—to carry on, and, as *he* feels, risk his passengers' lives, or to refuse, and leave them stranded.

While He's Arguing

He can, of course, inform the union, and the union can inform the Ministry of Transport. But time is going on. Bus schedules are planned in minutes—not in hours or days. While he's arguing, there's a bus missing on the service. The number of stranded passengers is increasing with every passing minute. If one driver refuses to handle the bus, the company officials have to ask another driver to take it out.

Some of the other drivers may be willing to risk it, but they know that, if they do, they'll be making the first driver's refusal seem unjustified. They know it isn't unjustified. So they feel compelled to refuse also. The traffic manager feels it's his duty to insist. Feelings on both sides run high. And before you know where you are, you've got another unofficial strike.

Who is to blame? No one that I can see. The men who run the service have done all they can. The only remedy is a new bus.

That, multiplied by several thousands, is our bus problem as I see it today.

I can't feel as happy as the Ministry of Transport apparently does about the bus accident figures. It's all very well to say our buses are safe enough at the moment. But with every passing day every one of those old buses is getting that much older — that much beyond any fitter's power to make absolutely safe.

Commonsense Solution

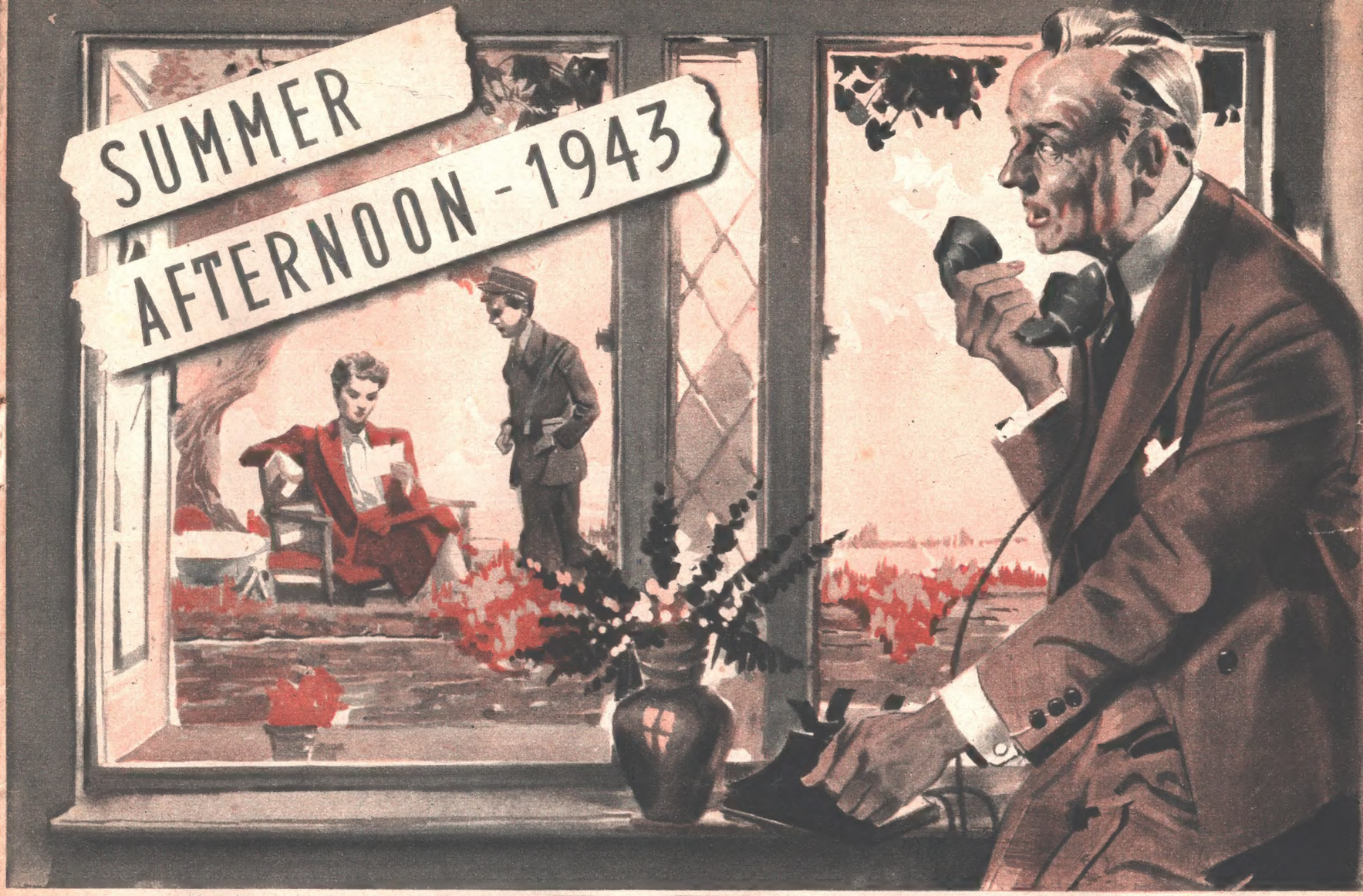
Nor, without new buses, can I see what the Ministry's expert examiners can do. If they order the old bus off the road they deprive us of essential transport. If they allow it to stay on the road the service becomes increasingly unreliable—if not positively dangerous.

It seems to me this is a case where common sense cries out for our home needs to be supplied before the export market.

So much of our total production depends on good bus services. Once we allow our buses to break down, almost everything else in the country will break down with them.

OH, JOHNNY! by TIM

SUMMER AFTERNOON - 1943



Almost paralysed, he watched his wife open the envelope. Vague sounds came to him over the phone, but he could not reply

by ANTHONY PARKER

ILLUSTRATED BY E. RATCLIFF

One day, he knew, that telegram would come—and it was essential that he should be the first to open it

"CHARLES, DEAR," said his wife, "slip in and answer the phone, will you?" And then again, a few moments later, still without lifting her head from her book: "Charles, dear—the telephone. Can't you hear it?"

Yes, he could hear it—one half of him could sense every tremor of its ring; but the rest of his attention, just as intensely, was fixed on a small uniformed figure coming slowly up the hill towards their garden gate.

* * *

That summer the bees had hummed about the foxgloves as inconsequently as ever. The sun had lighted the lawn to a vivid green, and over everything the blue of the sky shimmered in glorious calm. Lansdowne had worked little, preferring to spend most of his time at home with his wife, pottering about the garden, going for walks over the hills, or reading in a deck-chair on the grass.

He had money, a big house and a wife who reciprocated his love—everything; and all was perfect, but for one thing. As that could not be avoided, he learned in time to accept it: other men's sons were in the Army, away from home, and he, like the countless others, had to be brave. His wife, he knew, felt Norman's absence more than he did—it was more difficult for a woman—yet the courage with which she bore it never ceased to make him admire and love her more.

Together, they were growing old—and with her he was content that it should be so. Often, that summer, she smiled, and kissed his cheek; she moved about the house like a gentle breeze, arranging the flowers here, changing the ornaments there, leaving the sense of her presence everywhere.

It seemed to him often that she symbolized Peace—a beautiful woman gracefully preserving calm in a world torn with war. At breakfast she read the papers as though they brought news of a distant planet; the closeness of the enemy, sprawled across the whole of Europe, and the riot of doubts and anxieties before the invasion, left no mark upon her face. She seemed timeless, unmovable, and tranquil like the summer sky.

Yet he knew this was only a facade taken on to help herself through her loneliness and worry—and more than for herself, too: it was chiefly to help him.

Often, when they went out for walks, he would catch her glancing up at the sky with a momentary expression of fear, or see her lost for a fraction of a second in anxiety as she gazed at the hills ahead. He knew she was thinking of Norman, wondering whether he were safe, and longing for him to come home. But she never spoke her thoughts: in front of him she preserved her serene, and almost complete, calm.

He himself was horribly afraid, but inspired by her example, he strove to hide his feelings from her, to appear cheerful at all times. He was not good at it, and often she made him feel ashamed. Anyway, it was useless to pretend to her: she knew.

He never forgot the day when he learned, by accident, what his son was doing. On the last day of his leave, Norman had gone out for a walk with him: they'd been talking, quite casually, about the war and the Occupation. As they climbed over a stile, Lansdowne, thinking of a Belgian business friend, said: "I suppose old Rallon will be dead by now."

"He's not," said Norman—and then stopped, with one foot still on the stile in front of him, and his hands holding the supports. For a long moment father and son looked at each other.

"You must never say a word to anyone—not even to mother."

Lansdowne nodded, stunned. Norman jumped over, and then, as he casually knocked out his pipe on the fence, added: "It might mean my life if you did."

For weeks afterwards, Lansdowne had been unable to grasp the full meaning of what he knew. It was inconceivable to him that the boy should be slipping into Belgium, working with the Underground Movement, organizing resistance, helping to dynamite bridges and blow up trains.

The dangers of the rugby field when he was at school had seemed bad enough—he had always thought Norman a delicate boy; this, now, was so horrifying that he could scarcely think it real. But as time went past, he realized what it meant and every moment became loaded with fear.

For him there were not even half-consolations; his son was not out of harm's way up in the wilds of Scotland, or even fairly safe out in India, like so many other men's sons—he was right inside the Germans' camp.

One morning he realized something else, too. Though she was unaware of the details, his wife knew. Because she was a woman, she sensed his added anxiety. She said nothing about it, and betrayed no fear—but he, knowing her as he did, knew that she knew.

Their life went on in the same way,

Oldest mystery in the world . . . Sleep

There is no generally accepted answer to the question: "What is Sleep?" Yet we spend, on the average, one-third of our life in bed. And, if we are starved of sleep, we quickly get below par.

So sleep remains a mystery, though our health depends upon it. Yet some facts are known about sleep. We know, for instance, that the whole body does not sleep at once, for we brush away a fly without waking! We know, too, that *deep* sleep is more valuable than *long* sleep. That is why Horlicks is such a boon at bedtime. It promotes the deep refreshing sleep we need for renewed vitality next day. . . . We are doing our best to improve supplies.

HORLICKS

"Open the windows? What, with tobacco the price it is?"

each helping the other by that unspoken understanding which years of love and comradeship alone can bring. His business ran itself without much help from him, and that gave him the opportunity to stay at home and be near her that he wanted. Inadequate though he felt, he knew that his being there helped her as it helped him.

"This is what it will be like when I retire next year," he would say, and she would smile. "Yes. Won't it be wonderful?" And she would kiss him, and pat his hand.

Fervently, he prayed that next year would bring peace, would bring Norman home. He dreaded the prospect of spending that year, too, waiting. And perhaps it would be more than a year . . . but then he would look at his wife, and seeing her frail figure so strong, become more calm.

He read one morning that Belgian patriots had tried to blow up a train, had failed—and that seventeen men had been arrested and shot. He went down to the office, taking the paper with him, telling her that he wanted to do the crossword. But at business he could find nothing to keep his mind occupied, and, leaving the paper in the wastepaper basket, he came home. The afternoon was dull and sultry, and he tried to read, without success.

Next morning, he read every single item of news before his wife came down to breakfast, but there was no mention of the matter and so he allowed her to have it. And the next morning, he read it again, all through, and the next, until after a week he bothered no more. Yet through each day he was dreading something he felt sure was going to happen.

When the front-door bell rang, he was always the first to answer it. Over and over again he enacted the scene in his imagination. He held out his hand for the telegram . . . gave the boy sixpence . . . slowly opened the envelope . . . unfolded the slip of paper inside.

One day, he knew, that telegram would come—and he had to be prepared: he tried to master the situation before it happened, defending himself against the impending blow.

But when another week passed, he became more confident, and his fear seized him less frequently, until eventually there came a day when he deliberately refrained from going to answer the door. He listened from the landing as his wife went to open it; he felt weak in his stomach as he heard her courteously refuse to buy boot laces, nail brushes, and hair pins. After that, he found an interesting book and read quite a lot of it each day. . . .

They sat together in deck-chairs on the lawn, and at four o'clock his wife brought out their tea. He told her about his book, and afterwards she picked it up and began to read. Lansdowne lay back in his chair and smoked a cigarette.

Behind him he could hear a bee buzzing round the foxgloves: idly, he watched a boy on a bicycle shooting down the hill past the low hedge at the end of the garden. From where he sat, he could watch him all the way down to the village at the bottom.

"This is very good," said his wife. "I've only finished the first two chapters, but it's excellent." She smiled, bent her head, and went on reading.

Lansdowne looked at the hills in the distance. They shimmered in the sun. He looked at Mrs. Peirce's house on the other side of the valley, white among the trees; and then his eyes wandered back to the road. He shut them: then opened them again. His eyesight was excellent—he knew it wasn't playing him tricks. A telegraph boy was coming up the hill.

The bee buzzed and then, as it entered a flower, the sound ceased. Everything was still. The boy came on with his head bent, slowly: the hill was very steep. Lansdowne felt his hands begin to tremble, and he gripped the side of his chair: his palms were moist. Suddenly, from the house behind him, came the sound of the telephone's ringing.

"Charles, dear," said his wife, "slip in and answer the phone, will you?" The boy came nearer. The bee began to buzz again.

"Charles, dear—the telephone. Can't you hear it?"

I haven't time to answer it and get back, he thought, desperately. He sat motionless, fighting to stop the trembling which wanted to possess his whole body. I can't let her take it: she'll collapse if she opens it herself. I've got to be the first to read it. . . .

This was the reality, the performance of the scene he'd so often rehearsed. Terrible though he knew it would be, he felt that if he opened the telegram it would in some way, however small, make it easier for her. Above all he wanted to protect her from the initial shock, spare her the first dreadful blow that the printed words would deal.

Impatiently, the phone went on ringing. The boy had nearly reached the hedge at the bottom of the garden.

"Can't you answer it?" he said, his voice perfectly calm.

"No, I'm just at a most interesting part. Do go, dear."

He knew that if she looked up she would see the wild terror on his face. Then she, too, would share the agony of waiting for the boy to reach them.

A peaked cap appeared above the end of the hedge. His wife began to lift her head. With a bound, Lansdowne was across the lawn and into the house before she could look at him. From the hall where the telephone was he could see through the window out on to the lawn and across to the gate. And as he lifted the receiver he saw the telegraph boy come into the garden.

"Just a moment, please," he said, hoarsely, into the phone. "Just a moment."

PARALYSED, he had to watch. The boy saw his wife, turned, and walked across the lawn. She smiled at him, took the telegram, and fumbled in her handbag for her purse. He could hear vague words over the phone, but he could not speak. His wife handed the boy a coin and began to tear open the envelope.

He stood with the receiver pressed to his ear, scarcely able to see; a drop of perspiration slid from his brow down his nose. The air seemed full of madly buzzing bees.

His wife unfolded the paper. In the distance a voice said: "Hello! Hello! Is that you, dad? It's me—Norman. Hello!" Gradually, he began to hear it more clearly.

Sitting up in her deck-chair his wife, smiling, said: "Look, dear, isn't this nice? Mrs. Richardson's just had a baby. They want us to go over and see them next weekend."

"We won't be able to," he said. "Norman's coming home."

WRITE TO JOHN BULL ABOUT IT

So you want to make a Will?

NOBODY likes to think of dying—but it's only common sense to make one's will. A reader writes:

"Just how do I set about the job? What are the duties of the executors? Who should hold the will? And what are the death duties likely to be on £2,000?"

If you buy a will form at a post office or a stationer's and follow the printed instructions carefully, the will will be valid without the help of a solicitor. The executors whom you appoint will have to prove the will at the district probate office. When they have received the grant of probate, they will pay all debts and administer the estate according to the terms of the will. The man who makes the will may retain it himself or place it with someone else for safe keeping. Many people deposit it at a bank. No estate duty is payable unless the value exceeds £2,000. Legacy duty may be payable in certain cases according to the amount and the beneficiary's relationship to the deceased.

Our team of experts will solve your queries (except medical) if you send them to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 186 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Domestic problems should be sent to "Humanist," at the same address. Stamp for reply, please.

COAL was golden for Mr. STEEL!

To help readers who missed their JOHN BULL last week, here are the chief winners in *Bullets* 1,608; those for Contest 1,609 are due on this page next week.

FIRST PRIZE, £300 plus New Year Celebration: J. L. Steel, 27 Clinton Road, Leatherhead: WHAT MINER'S FOUND "DOWN UNDER"—NEW *Zeal!*

SECOND PRIZE, £25: R. W. Wright, Glenesk, Perth Road, Dunblane, Perthshire: OLD MAN 1947—"EVERGREEN" IN ELIZABETH'S "GARDEN."

THIRD PRIZE, £10: J. Trahair, Gwavas Villa, Newlyn, Penzance: ANOTHER WORLD—JUST "BEYOND THE GAP."

OTHER AWARDS: £9: C. Jones, 42 Gleton Avenue, West Hove: END OF A CONFERENCE—ANGLO-AMERICAN "AGREEMENT" ABOUT MOLOTOV! £8: A. W. Ingram, 103 Frobisher Road, Hornsey, N.8: END OF A GAMBLE—"CRUMPLED FORM" IN ROADWAY. £7: L. Thorpe, 206 Manchester Road, Denton, Manchester: LESSON TO EVERYBODY—"CIVIL DEFENCE CLASSES RE-OPENING—" £6: H. Scholes, 4 Marley Drive, Park Road, Sale, Manchester: WHAT WILSON FOUND—BEHIND "CURTAIN," "TRADESMAN'S ENTRANCE." Five of £5: H. Aspin, 3 Burnsall Avenue, Blackpool: END OF A BUDDING—NURSE—A FORBIDDING MATRON! W. A. R. Deacon, 24 Bristol Road, Coventry: TRUE LOVE—MOONSHINE? HIGHLIGHT! Miss R. L. M. Sambrook, 152 Lichfield Road, Bloxwich: WHAT WINSTON'S FOUND—*Real* DESERT TO "PAINT." Miss E. Watson, 57 Hercus Loan, Musselburgh: END OF A TRIAL—OF PATIENCE, PALESTINE "VERDICT." C. Wright, The Schoolhouse, Woodlesford, near Leeds: SKIES MAY BE GREY, BUT—LOVELY, AFTER HOSPITAL CEILING!

"My wife and I hope others will win such a prize"—said Rev. G. W. Poultney, Hove, winner of a £25 Mystery Presentation in 1947.

BULLETS & XWORDS RULES

1. First Prize to best *Bullet* received, others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps value 1s. for four *Bullets*, or value 6d. to cover two *Bullets*. Plain paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted only on condition that results of this week's Contests in JOHN BULL dated February 7, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding.

Novel 2-in-1 First

heading Prizes value over

£300 CASH plus £25 Mystery Presentation **£500**

Each of the nine Mystery Gifts previously awarded has been hailed with delight by its winner. Another will accompany this week's First Prize Cheque.

£25, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 5 of £5

50 "Bullets" Seasons, 1,948 New Prizes each with £20 Bonus Opportunity

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "Examples"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

In The World Today
Torch Of Progress
America v. Russia
To Fill The Shops
Old As The Hills
Propaganda's Poison
Peace Treaty — Roaring Lion
Never Fails — Cherished
The Smallest — Touch And Go
Sporting — Handy Gadget
Footing The Bill
Dogged Determination
On Bended Knees
Watered Down
Hurry Up, Mr. Plumber
Made A Mess Of It

Incomplete "Examples"—see Instructions

Called The ..... What To.....
Whoever ..... If .....Dared
Eternally ..... Mother....., But

XWORD £100 and SURPRISE PARCELS

PRIZES VALUE UP TO £225

£100 FIRST PRIZE

Awards value £25 amongst Runners-up—Big Surprise Parcel from Selfridges with each prize value £1 or over.

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with *one* extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.).

Plain-paper Squares, same rate of Entry-fee. Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated January 31.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature upon coupon constitutes agreement to Rules.

£100 OUTRIGHT WINNERS OF 1947

Result of Contest 561 is due here next week. Meanwhile, let these latest outright winners encourage you to score in 1948: G. Beaumont, Longwood, Huddersfield; T. L. McRobert, 37 Gladsmuir Rd., Glasgow; M. Williams, 4 Torwood Gdns., Torquay; Miss A. Farey, 4 Grosvenor Ter., Ilkley; H. H. Simpson, 72 Haigh Lane, Oldham; A. H. Mander, 51 Clarendon St., Leamington; Miss E. Holdsworth, 14 Alexandra Cres., Ilkley; C. W. Laverick, 31 Eastlea Av., Bishop Auckland; J. Butler, 12A Fort Luton Camp, Chatham; G. Burgess, 82 Hemingford Rd., N.1; C. Davis, 14 Lymington Close, S.W.16; Miss C. Leithead, 4 Gosforth Ter., Newcastle.

CLUES FOR XWORD 564

Across

1. Tramping miles over rough country you'll probably find
3. You won't make progress if you rest on your oars in
6. It isn't usually difficult to get this of a particular yarn
10. Opportunism is characteristic of one who is this
12. Should always be given when conductor asks for it
13. Wire is commonly used in this
14. Certain ones quite commonly close with a catch

Down

1. Coal shortage must not reduce our flow of exports to this
2. We're accustomed to them sloping
4. Football team is out after one
5. One may be too starchy to be stomached by some people
7. Child's fear of this indicates wrong teaching
8. If railways can't keep these in repair there will be difficulties
9. It may be difficult to tell one from another
11. Has to be sharp to keep getting away

RECORD OFFER NEXT WEEK

ADDRESS ENTRY: "BULLETS" 1,612 (or XWORD 564) "JOHN BULL," LONG ACRE, LONDON, W.C.2 (Comp.)

STICK 2½d. STAMP here and address this label if you want the help of *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated Jan. 31 containing **GRAND NEW PRIZE OFFER**

425
NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
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EXAMPLE .....
BULLET .....
EX. .....
B. .....
EX. .....
B. .....
EX. .....
B. .....

Closing Postmark,
1,612 MON., JAN. 19

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O. value .....
No. .....

Signed .....
Address .....
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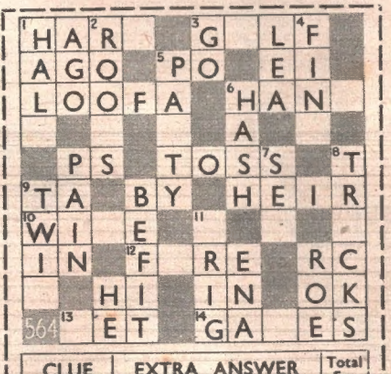

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

I enclose P.O. value.....
No..... Closing Postmark. MON. JAN. 19
Signed..... **564**
Address.....
.....

but there's a steadier CALL for

GILBEY'S GIN

46/6

This is the toothbrush that so many dentists themselves use—because of its correctly-shaped head (long or short), its clean-cut tufts, and its fine finish. In short, because SPA has every quality that a toothbrush should have.

John Freeman & Co., Ltd., "Spa" Brush Works, Chesham, Bucks.

Mrs. FOOLISH only cleans her teeth

Mrs. WISE cares for her gums as well, by using Gibbs S.R. TOOTHPASTE

GR 166A 943

THE perfected SHAVE

Brylshave—the most comfortable shave you ever had in your life. It is brushless, slick, silky smooth shaving. The skin is left softened and smoothed by special emollients. It wouldn't be made at all if it wasn't something entirely new in shaving luxury. Try it! In jars 1/11 (including purchase tax)

BRUSHLESS

Brylshave

"VERY, VERY COMFORTABLE"

Made by the makers of BRYLCREEM

No. 7 B

"She's been picked for Batchelor's REG^D where the best Peas go!"

"I b'lieve it's my OXO!"

Bobbie is never missing when it's OXO time! Like so many children, he's alway's eager for that delicious beefy beverage and mother is happy knowing it does him a power of good.

My! OXO!